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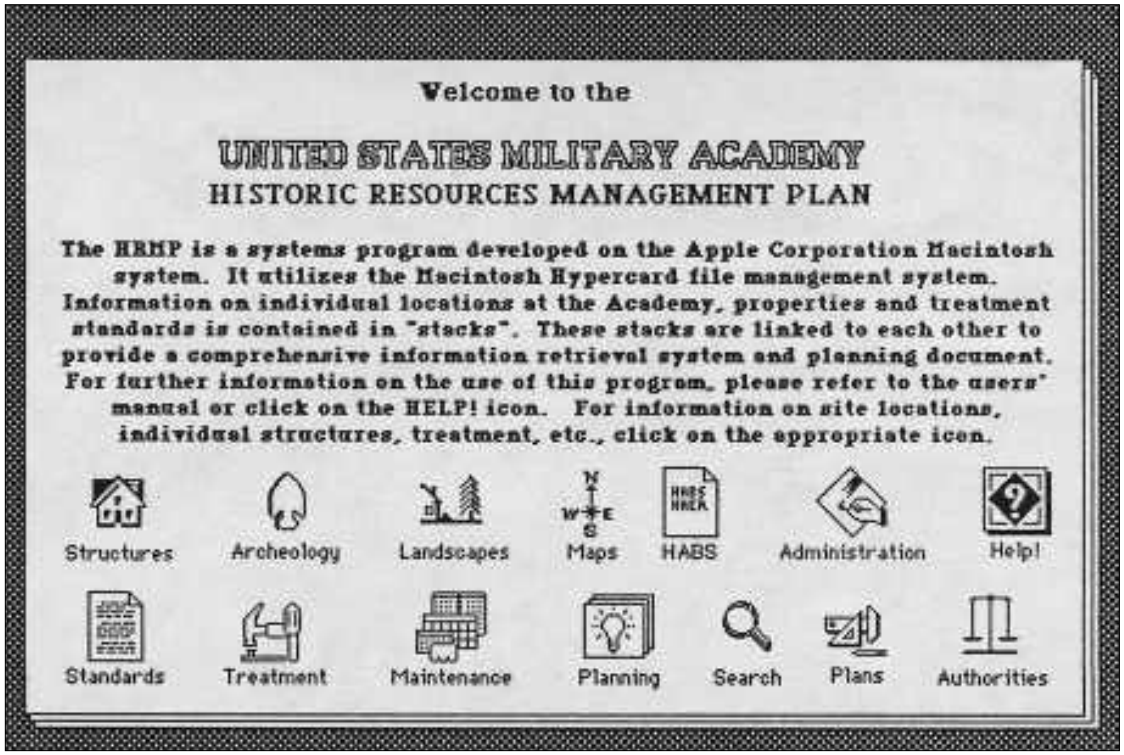
CRM Planning at Two Service Academies

In an effort to establish strong self-governing cultural resource management programs, each military service has developed internal directives, regulations, and instructions guiding the treatment of cultural resources through development of Cultural Resource Management Plans. These directives are not written as counterpart regulations to 36 CFR Part 800, "Protection of Historic Properties." Instead, they establish an internal process designed to satisfy the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) while meeting fundamental mission goals of the military.

The first military service to issue such regulations was the Department of the Army. In May of 1984 the Army published AR 420-40, "Historic Preservation." This internal regulation established the goal of creating a "Historic Preservation Plan" (HPP) for each Army installation. The initial HPPs resulting from this regulation were less than satisfactory. This was due, in part, to a lack of experience on the part of installation staff and contractors, as well as differences in understanding.

Illustration of the main program menu for the HRMP for the USMA showing the graphic interface format.



United States Military Academy

By 1987 no HPP had been approved through the Army review system, or accepted by a State Historic Preservation Officer or the Advisory Council as a suitable alternative to review under Section 106. This situation resulted in the Army approaching the Advisory Council for assistance. After much debate surrounding the potential for a conflict of interest, the Advisory Council took on the challenge of developing a prototype HPP that could be applied to all Army installations. The United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York, would be the focus of the initial work.

The Advisory Council assigned two staff members to the task, Eleni Silverman, the staff architectural historian, and myself, at that time Senior Architect to the Council. Work started on the project in early June 1988.

Nomenclature

As we have all found through years of experience, what you mean to say and what others hear can be quite different. In the case of the Army regulations, the term "Historic Preservation Plan" appeared to place emphasis on the act of "preservation." The fact is that the act of "preservation" is not part of the responsibilities of any installation commander, and that was not the intent of the Army regulation. The purpose of the regulation, and the HPPs, was to improve management of historic resources at the installation. Preservation may be one of the management options, but it should not be the focus of the plan. Every commander, however, is responsible to "manage" those resources and

facilities under his/her command. Thus, the HPP was turned into a Historic Resources Management Plan (HRMP), later a Cultural Resources Management Plan. It was a small issue, but one that changed the focus and acceptability of the plan dramatically.

Use of the appropriate nomenclature in the development of the USMA plan was a constant consideration. Unless the terms used in the plan are consistent with those familiar to the client, the plan has little hope of being useful.

Delivery Systems

Another consideration was how the plan should be presented to the users. Again, we encountered a difference in what was needed and what was expected. The expectation was that the plan would look like a report: a printed document, double spaced, with a history of the site starting from the Ice Age, with an inventory of resources, along with recommendations for treatment.

Photograph of the Cadet Area of the United States Air Force Academy showing the Cadet Chapel and dormitories. This photo is included as a resource in the Academy's CRMP.

Understanding that any management plan is a working, dynamic document required us to consider alternative delivery systems, to look at what would best serve the project requirements and the client.

Like any other problem, the more questions you answer, the more arise. Who was the client, the user? Although the Army HQ asked for the prototype, the user would be individual installations. And, within the installation there would be a host of users, from the Commander and Chief Engineer, to the installation planner, shops personnel, and maintenance crew. This made a lot of different users, all potentially seeking different types of information for different reasons. Accordingly, the delivery system had to address the needs of all of the potential users.

Content

As we were considering how to provide the information, we were trying to determine what information should be included in the plan. The Army indicated that they felt the plan should contain all the information needed for the user to make the "smart" decision on the disposition and treatment of a resource; we agreed. The management of cultural resources not only involves adherence to standard code requirements and user needs, but also all of the preservation laws and standards, accessibility standards, energy conservation goals, respect for historic traditions, quality of life, and cultural beliefs and practices.

We quickly determined that you don't provide this quantity of information in a printed format and expect it to be useful. The alternative appeared to be development of a computerized plan. Use of a computer would allow inclusion of all of the necessary decision-making information, and also solve the problem of providing different types of information to different levels of users.

The Apple Macintosh program Hypercard was, at the time, the only graphic interface program that would allow development of a graphical, interactive data retrieval system. This would be the core of our operating system. Fortunately, since the introduction of WINDOWS, and software applications by main line companies such as Oracle and Microsoft, the point and click operating ease of the original program is now available on virtually all personal computers (PCs).

The HRMP/USMA includes 1,442 buildings, structures, and monuments, as well as approximately 65 identified archeological sites and another 85 potential sites. The plan covers a little over 18,000 acres of land and incorporates the National Historic Landmark (NHL) historic cantonment and Frederick Law Olmsted designed landscaping. The program is divided into 23 stacks of information, such as Structures, Archeology, Landscapes, Treatment, Standards, and Administrative Process. To obtain information or guidance, the user simply points the arrow at the subject and clicks. The user is then directed to the

information through a series of menus. The goal in developing the program was to provide the Academy, and any other installation using the computer "shell" program, with an easy to use management tool that allowed for meeting both mission needs and preservation interests in an effective and efficient manner.

With the assistance of the U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratories in Champaign, Illinois, which developed archeological modeling and undertook field testing, and some additional staff help, development of the program took two people 13 months. The system was installed at the Academy on July 5, 1989. It includes a stand-alone computer station, map layers integrated into the Academy's existing GIS system, and a printed Executive Summary for use by the Command for long-term economic and resource planning.

United States Air Force Academy

The Air Force followed the Army in development of internal regulations addressing cultural resources and, in June of 1994, issued Air Force Instruction 32-7065, "Cultural Resources Management." This Instruction calls for every Air Force installation to develop a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP).

At the same time that the Instruction was being issued, the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) and Air Staff in Washington, DC, asked my firm, John Cullinane Associates, to assist them in developing a prototype computerized CRMP. As with the Army plan, this project would use their premiere installation, the USAFA, as the test installation for our initial work.

The same principles applied to this project as to the Army's. They included the need to identify the user, define the goals of the CRMP, gather all of the relevant information and data, and develop an easy-to-use program that could be used by a variety of individuals to obtain the information they need to do their job in an efficient and effective manner.

In this case the work was undertaken principally by myself and one staff member, Susan Lassell, a preservation planner, with assistance from USAFA staff, Stacy Wetstein, an Academy summer intern, the University of Colorado Colorado Springs Department of Anthropology, and the prime contractor, Skidmore, Owens, and Merrill, the Academy's original architects, who provided design standards for new construction. The program uses Microsoft's Access software as the underlying structure, allowing development of a true relational and graphical database system.

The shell program, recently made available for testing by Air Staff, contains the necessary planning, treatment, and administrative guidance for any installation's use. Once an individual installation answers questions on eight screens, their unique information is integrated into the program, and it is ready to use. The program is designed to allow this work to be done by in-house personnel. The customization by the installation and the emulation of Air Force Standard Operating Procedures help create a sense of ownership often lacking in contracted CRMPs.

The program delivered to the USAFA runs on the Engineering office's local area network, and is linked to the Academy's AutoCad files and maps, allowing individuals to call up complete installation data from their PC. The program includes pre-Academy cultural resources on the site relating to settlement, ranching, and railroad themes, as well as all of the construction associated with the Academy. As with any program, security systems are available to restrict the release of classified or restricted information, such as the exact locations of archeological sites. Accompanied by a printed Executive Summary, this CRMP program satisfies the Academy's need to meet mission goals, while complying with DoD Integrated CRMP directives, Air Force Instructions, and federal laws, regulations, and standards. Now completed, it will serve as the basis of a programmatic agreement among the installation, SHPO, and Advisory Council.

Through the use of modern technology and techniques both the Army and Air Force are reducing their administrative burden in meeting compliance requirements while successfully managing their facilities in a manner that meets mission requirements, economic restraints, and conserves some of our most historic and valuable resources.

John Cullinane served as Senior Architect for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation between 1976 and 1992. He is the principal in the firm of John Cullinane Associates, Architects & Preservation Planners, Annapolis, MD. You may reach him at 410-295-0400 or email <jcullinane@earthlink.net>.